Ombudsman
SASKATCHEWAN

Provincial Ombudsman

June 2003

The Honourable P. Myron Kowalsky
Speaker of the Legislative Assembly
Province of Saskatchewan
Legislative Building
REGINA, Saskatchewan
S4S 0B3

Dear Mr. Speaker:

It is my duty and privilege to submit to you and to the Members of the Legislature, in accordance with section 30 of *The Ombudsman and Children's Advocate Act*, the thirtieth annual report of the Provincial Ombudsman.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara J. Tomkins
OMBUDSMAN

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Table of Contents

Articles

Interesting Times in 2002 1
Budget 13
Top Ten List 25
Contact Us 27

Minister's Review

Social Services - Disability and Utility Allowances 8
Social Services - Special Needs Funding 16

Major Investigations

Corrections & Public Safety - Corrections Review 22

Case Summaries

SaskEnergy 7
Highway Traffic Board 11
Social Services 12
Learning 13
SaskTel 14
Agriculture and Food 18
Housing 20
Saskatchewan Government Insurance 21
Justice - Rentalsman 24
Workers' Compensation Board 26

Statistics

Charts & Graphs 28

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Interesting Times in 2002

The work of the Provincial Ombudsman, at its root, is to promote fairness in the provision of services by Saskatchewan's provincial government departments and agencies. This purpose is achieved via the exercise of four powers set out in *The Ombudsman and Children's Advocate Act*, as follows:

1. Receive and investigate complaints from members of the public who believe that they have been adversely affected by a decision or action of a provincial government agency;

2. Initiate, on the Ombudsman's own motion, the investigation of matters of systemic, public or other interest;

3. Resolve problems raised in complaints through the use of negotiation, conciliation, mediation and other non-adversarial approaches; and

4. Undertake public education about the powers and duties of the Ombudsman.

During 2002, work was directed at all four of these powers as well, of course, as matters relating to the administration of the office and service delivery.

PUBLIC COMPLAINTS

As has been a long-time trend, the number of complaints received from members of the public continued to rise: we received 2,647 complaints against government in 2002, a 9% increase over the 2,435 we received in 2001. The dedication and good work of staff enabled us to manage the increase without substantial impact. However, the cumulative effect of these increases - over 35% since 1997 - cannot be managed indefinitely without there being significant impact on our ability to provide effective and valuable service. If demand continues to increase without the acquisition of parallel resources, we will have no choice but to offer less timely service or limit complaints received by nature or number. I am disturbed by either possibility.

The cumulative effect of these increases cannot be managed indefinitely without there being significant impact.

OWN MOTION INVESTIGATIONS

We undertake a number of investigations on my own motion every year, though this is not widely known due to the confidentiality generally necessary to our work. 2002 was no different in the sense that a number of own motion narrow and systemic investigations were conducted. 2002 was quite different, however, in that we concluded and reported the results of our systemic review of the four adult correctional centres. Our report, titled *"Locked Out: A Review*

KUDOS CONTINUED

In this report, I have continued my practice of extending the kudos of my office to named individuals in the public service who have made exceptional effort and shown real commitment to the fairness concepts promoted by my office. These kudos will be found scattered in the margins of the report.

of Conditions of Custody in Saskatchewan Correctional Centres" was released late in November 2002.

The Corrections Review Report demonstrates, I think, the value of major and systemic investigations and the quality of work that this office can do with limited resources dedicated to that purpose. While budgetary pressures will further restrict our ability to dedicate resources to major and systemic investigations, I remain hopeful that we will be able to continue such work on a limited basis.

The Corrections Review Report demonstrates the value of major and systemic investigations.

ALTERNATE CASE RESOLUTION

In keeping with our power to resolve problems arising from complaints via mediation, negotiation, conciliation and other non-adversarial approaches, we continue to offer some complainants an alternative to our traditional investigation process. These complainants have the opportunity to utilize our Alternative Case Resolution (ACR) process. Rather than "handing-off" their complaints to my office for investigation and resolution, our ACR process allows complainants and the government agency involved to work together toward a solution satisfactory to both. Participants - both government and public - have embraced the process and found it valuable.

Participants have embraced the process and found it valuable.

Our work with ACR continues to enhance the other work of the office and we are investigating whether our expertise in the area might be helpful to government employees who deal with the public. If so, we might be able to enhance their skills at forestalling complaints before they arise or, at least, before they reach our office. We are in the process of assembling focus groups of government employees to determine their experiences with complaints. Using their input, our experience and other resources, we intend to collect information about complaints and complainants and to develop an information package for government employees regarding complaint management and fairness.

PUBLIC EDUCATION AND COMMUNICATIONS

Our work in public education and communications continued throughout 2002, although much reduced after the loss of our Communications Co-Ordinator position. We continued to make presentations to the public and to

government employees on an as-requested basis. We are struggling to complete certain educational items but remain optimistic that they will eventually be completed.

We are excited by recent developments.

We are excited by recent developments. In discussions with the Public Service Commission, it appears that there may be opportunities for a more co-ordinated approach to providing information about fairness, our office and our work to government employees if we are able to upgrade our website with this in mind.

Even more exciting, we have been involved in discussions that may lead to the inclusion of information about the office and our role in parliamentary democracy in the elementary and high school curricula. Despite our very limited public education resources, we believe that the work can be done with the help of all of the staff - whether in the production of necessary materials, making occasional presentations and, of course, upgrading our website to include material appropriate to children and youth and to their studies. It's important work and we'll find a way to get it done.

ADMINISTRATION AND SERVICE DELIVERY

Unfortunately, there was less good news and less reason for optimism in the areas of the administration of the office and service delivery.

On the bright side, we undertook and will shortly complete a dedicated project to assist us to better serve residents of northern Saskatchewan. We are looking at the needs of those residents and the means of best meeting them. In addition, we are examining various models of service delivery for smaller numbers of people in geographically distant communities with a view to finding a model that might be appropriate for northern residents and our office. In the process, we have forged new connections to people and organizations - government and other - in northern communities and strengthened those that resulted from my travels north in recent years.

Now the bad news. In February 2002, our request for funding to maintain status quo services was declined. The net result of this was a shortfall of over $70,000 for 2002-03; this sum could not be absorbed. The consequence was that we abolished our Communications Co-Ordinator position effective at the end of May 2002. While the

abolition of this position was not adequate to absorb the entire budget shortfall, a number of additional but less dramatic measures enabled us to meet fiscal requirements for 2002/03.

Now the bad news.

Our 2003/04 budget request was also declined. The impact of this will be detailed in next year's report but will include the loss of significant investigative capacity, loss of stature and various limitations in most aspects of our work.

While these are discouraging circumstances, we remain enthusiastic about our work and the possibilities for the coming year. We are aware that many agencies of government and the legislative assembly face similar budgetary challenges and my office itself has managed in such circumstances in many of its thirty years.

Nonetheless, in the face of such restrictions and compromises, I am forced to wonder again if the value and impact of the office have been overlooked or underestimated. While the office is known as a permanent forum for the independent review of complaints and concerns about government actions and decisions, its value and impact extend far beyond the review and resolution of individual complaints.

First, the existence of the office *per se* offers public, government and legislators a safeguard and assurance that government cannot act without consequence and will be accountable. **This has significant value.**

Individual investigations are the meat and potatoes of our work in that they are the primary means by which we promote fairness in the provision of services by provincial government agencies. In instances where unfairness is found, a resolution is recommended that will rectify the matter for the individual but, equally important, will also lead to changes to policy or practice that will prevent a recurrence in future. **These changes have significant value.**

Far more frequently, our investigations establish that government and its employees acted fairly or, better yet, that they provided extraordinary service. **This affirmation of the good work that government does has significant value.**

Major investigations usually involve a systemic review of a program or part of a program; our recently published Corrections Review is a

prime example. Our modest expenditure of resources in these cases leads often to a new understanding of programs and their impact, as well as government's obligations to its constituency. **This perspective has significant value.**

The resolution of complaints by mediation, conciliation, facilitated conversation and other non-adversarial and non-investigative processes gives both our complainant and government an opportunity to better understand each other and the impact of their actions and decisions. **This insight has significant value.**

Public education offers the public information about their rights and responsibilities, as well as those of government. **This understanding has significant value.**

Far more frequently, our investigations establish that government acted fairly.

All of this from a relatively small office with a relatively small budget. Yet I am forced to conclude that these benefits are not always fully understood or fully appreciated. A few of my reasons are:

- While we are gratified by the generally positive and often enthusiastic day-to-day response to our work on public complaints, we are discouraged by the sometimes dismissive responses we receive. This indicates, I think, either a lack of understanding of our work and our role or a lack of respect for our work, our role and our complainants. Either way, it is disturbing.

- On a broader scale, we far too often see issues being discussed in the media or even in the Legislative Assembly that would more appropriately be resolved through the work of our office. But the office is simply overlooked. This suggests a lack of understanding or regard. It draws to my attention the need to redouble our work in public education. However, we lack the resources to do so.

- The amendments that we have requested over many years (and highlighted in last year's annual report) are apparently not proceeding.

Without a better understanding of and regard for the work of the office, our full potential will not be realized.

For example, the scrutiny undertaken by the Ombudsman's office affords us an intricate

knowledge about and unique perspective on government programs and their application, generally and in individual cases. We are convinced that those who are committed to excellence in public administration would find real value if we had an opportunity to share our perspective by means of informal and/or formal reporting. In so suggesting, we are not proposing an advocacy role for the office but merely one of sharing information on issues of public interest. It's work I'd like to see the office do.

Our experience over thirty years has highlighted an increased reliance on rights-based documents. It is virtually impossible to oversee the work of government without measuring it against human rights instruments to which the province and Canada are committed. Our Corrections Review, in fact, was fundamentally a rights-based review. I'd like to see the office take this rights-based perspective in more of its investigations.

The amendments are apparently not proceeding.

In addition, we have the opportunity to provide the province a sort of human rights lens of broad application, far beyond issues of discrimination. Eventually, I would like to see the office establish a defined focus to enable the sustained and on-going research this work demands and to enable this work to continue and expand, possibly as part of the public issue perspective described above.

The value of the Ombudsman's office is not well-understood or easily measured. It is, however, unquestionably valuable to legislators, government and the public. It has potential far beyond its current practices and resources.

I am anxious to leave the office well-situated for my successor.

As I near my last year as Saskatchewan's Ombudsman, I am anxious to leave the office well-situated for my successor. I am hopeful that these comments will be taken in the constructive manner in which they are offered and that my successor may find a legislative base and resources adequate to enable him or her to take a respected Office of the Provincial Ombudsman gracefully into the 21st century, if a little late.

KUDOS

Myra Parcher and Dawn Fong, Home Care Supervisors at the Saskatoon Regional Health Authority deserve recognition for taking the time to meet with a client, listen to his concerns and work toward a respectful resolution.

All names used in case summaries included in this report are fictitious.

Case Summary

Am I My Sister's Keeper?

Mary was a residential customer in good standing with SaskEnergy and had been for some time. Her sister June was looking for a place to stay temporarily and moved in with Mary. It seemed like a good idea at the time but the next thing Mary knew, SaskEnergy added June's name to Mary's energy account. Next, they advised her that June had an outstanding bill from a prior residence and if someone didn't pay it, Mary's service would be disconnected. Mary didn't think this was fair, especially since June was only staying with her temporarily. Further, Mary had nothing to do with the outstanding account and knew nothing about it.

We knew what this was about. SaskEnergy had a long-standing policy whereby they held all adults who benefited from energy service responsible for payment of the energy bill. We had investigated that policy in the past and found it fair. However, we disagreed on the salient question: We thought the policy should apply to people who enjoyed the service that wasn't paid for but SaskEnergy thought it applied to anyone who was responsible for any service that the debtor customer enjoyed. We had discussed this with SaskEnergy on a number of occasions previously but hadn't been successful in securing a change to the policy.

Her little complaint led to a complete review and revamping of a major SaskEnergy policy.

The difference was illustrated in Mary's case. In our view, Mary did not enjoy any benefit from June's service and therefore, SaskEnergy should be limited to pursuing June (and anyone else who may have lived at her residence when the bill was accrued). However, using SaskEnergy's interpretation of the policy, June owed them money and enjoyed service at Mary's residence. Her debt would attach to the service Mary enjoyed and, therefore, it would attach to Mary's account. SaskEnergy would, in effect, expect Mary to be responsible for June's bill, whether by making sure June paid it or by paying it herself.

We thought that this wasn't fair. Mary didn't incur the outstanding account and certainly wasn't living at June's house when the bill was incurred. She didn't benefit from

KUDOS

Special acknowledgment goes to Tom Harrison, Director, West Boreal EcoRegion, Department of Environment, Meadow Lake, for his willingness to look at fair resolutions with clients and at providing services in a fair manner.

All names used in our examples included in this report are fictitious.

that service and we thought her service shouldn't be threatened as a result of it. We advised SaskEnergy of this view.

In response, SaskEnergy undertook to review its Benefit of Use Policy and made substantial and substantive revisions. The changes were numerous but all were derived fundamentally from the premise that no customer would be responsible directly or indirectly for service extended to another unless that customer personally benefited from the service in arrears. In a case like Mary and June, therefore, SaskEnergy would not place June's name on Mary's account or threaten disconnection of Mary's service. Instead, they would pursue June to arrange repayment and if she didn't pay voluntarily, SaskEnergy could pursue other civil remedies against her, including legal action. Mary is off the hook that, incidentally, we thought she should never have been on.

While obviously distressing to Mary, hers was one small account among thousands that SaskEnergy serves. But her little complaint led to a complete review and revamping of a major SaskEnergy policy. This will benefit many hundreds of SaskEnergy customers in years to come.

Minister's Report

Disability and Utility Allowances Department of Social Services

Bill is a social assistance recipient who faces certain visual challenges that affect his ability to learn. He said that he was thereby disabled and entitled to a disability allowance. He also said that he had made a mistake when he wrote on his application for social assistance that utilities for his residence were paid by the landlord. He thought, therefore, that he should have received an allowance for utilities.

When he raised these matters with the department, the former was allowed commencing in 1997 but not earlier. The utility allowance was allowed from the date that Bill brought the error to the department's attention but not before. Bill thought this was unfair and complained to my office.

Disability Allowance:
Our investigation confirmed that Bill had first applied for social assistance late in 1991. Early in 1992 he was referred for vocational counselling. After that, he received various testing, including a psycho-educational assessment. This test confirmed that he suffered a visual

perception problem and identified Bill as a restricted learner.

Nonetheless, Bill entered upgrading and obtained his grade 10 equivalent, but after over twice the usual length of time. He wanted to proceed to grade 11/12 upgrading but this was not recommended. The department declined to sponsor the upgrading.

Eventually, in 1997, Bill entered an Office Education Program and a rehabilitation allowance was considered. However, the department declined to provide the allowance. Bill appealed that decision. The Provincial Appeal Board determined that Bill was eligible for disability allowance and ordered that it be paid retroactive to 1997 and ongoing.

It was my view that the department was aware of Bill's disability and incurred an obligation to pay the appropriate allowance.

In reviewing the department's file, it was noted that the department had copies of assessments and medical reports, some dating back as far as 1992. It appeared that most of these were on file by 1995 and some perhaps as early as 1992. It was my view that the department was therefore aware of Bill's disability and once the department had notice of the disability, it incurred an obligation to pay the appropriate allowance, even without formal application. I advised the Deputy Minister of my view and tentatively recommended that the retroactivity of the allowance be extended to at least 1995.

In response, the Deputy Minister agreed that the file showed indication that Bill had limitations but nothing confirming the severity or impact of those limitations and therefore, nothing confirming that Bill's disability was such as to entitle him to an allowance. She noted that the department had requested a medical report in 1995 so that it could determine if Bill might be eligible but it had not been returned. Without that report, she said, disability benefits would not be paid.

I asked the Deputy Minister to reconsider the matter. There was no dispute that Bill's was disabled and had been throughout. I agreed that the department would not necessarily pay the allowance until it was notified of the disability but I did not think that notification necessarily had to be in the form of the medical report. I thought that if

the facts justifying the allowance were on file, the department should take the initiative to pay the allowance. And I thought that the facts were on file and had been since at least 1995.

I was pleased when the Minister advised that he would accept and implement our recommendation.

The Deputy Minister did reconsider the matter but her position was not changed. I decided to report the matter to the Minister. I was pleased when the Minister advised that he would accept and implement our recommendation.

Utilities Allowance:
Social assistance recipients are generally entitled to an allowance for utilities that they pay in addition to residential rent. When Bill moved in 1996, he was required to pay a sum as rent and an additional sum for utilities. The utility payment was then made by the landlord. When Bill filled in the appropriate forms for the department, he wrote "Landlord pays utilities" in response to questions related to the utilities. The department, quite reasonably, took this to mean that the utilities were included in the rent and that Bill was not required to pay an additional amount for utilities. Thus, no utility allowance was issued.

In January 1999, the error was discovered and the department began paying Bill a utility allowance. The question brought to my office was whether that allowance ought to have been retroactive.

We examined Bill's rent receipts and noted that all were for amounts in excess of his base rent. On some but not all, the additional sum was identified as a charge for utilities. These receipts confirmed that Bill had paid for utilities in addition to rent for the duration of his tenancy. It was my view that, had this state of affairs been properly indicated at the time of the application in 1996, Bill would have received a utility allowance throughout. It was my view that his error could be easily corrected and should be corrected. I advised the Deputy Minister of my conclusions and tentative recommendation that the utilities allowance be paid retroactive to October 1996.

KUDOS

Linda Bogard, Director of Court Operations, Department of Justice, Regina gets the nod for taking the time to help clients understand court processes and thereby avoid problems later.

All names used in case summaries included in this report are fictitious.

The Deputy Minister did not share my view. She reminded me that the department must pay benefits in accordance with the information its clientele provides and that is exactly what it had done in Bill's case.

The question brought to my office was whether that allowance ought to have been retroactive.

I didn't dispute this in principle but noted, in response, that errors are not rare - whether by the department or its clientele. In previous cases where mistakes were made in the client's favour, my office has supported repayment of any improperly paid monies. I could not rationalize the department's position on Bill's case with its practice on overpayments; that is, when the department in error pays too much as assistance, the correction is retroactive to the time of the error. Yet in this case, when the department paid too little, the correction is not retroactive.

The Minister did not agree that there was an inconsistency in practices. My recommendation was declined.

The Deputy Minister maintained her position that benefits must accord to the information provided and, in this case, they were. On the other hand, we remained troubled by the result and what appeared to us to be inconsistent practices. This matter also was reported to the Minister.

The Minister noted that the client is responsible for providing complete and accurate information and must be responsible if he does not. In terms of what I viewed as an inconsistency between overpayments and underpayments, the Minister noted that it would be improper for clients to benefit from inaccurate information. He did not agree that there was an inconsistency in practices. My recommendation was declined.

Case Summary

Flexible and Fast!

Ralph was in a bit of a bind. His driver's licence had been suspended and the suspension was due to expire at the end of the month. The problem was that he had found a good job starting early in the month but a valid driver's licence was a requirement. He called our office.

Ralph's licence was originally suspended for three months but he had asked that the commencement of the suspension be deferred to enable him to complete his summer

KUDOS

Here's to Jim Rusnak, Team Leader, Saskatoon Correctional Centre, whose commitment to fairness is evident in his perspective on inmate complaints and whose compassion leads to exceptional resolutions.

job. The Highway Traffic Board (HTB) agreed to the deferral but extended the suspension to nine months. It seems the HTB thought that Ralph didn't view the suspension as a serious matter; Ralph admitted that his behaviour at the hearing was not positive and could have given that impression.

However, Ralph came to understand the seriousness of the matter and accepted responsibility for his behaviour. He was reluctant, however, to request further consideration from the Board, for fear that he'd wind up with another increase to the suspension.

Within 48 hours of his call to our office, Ralph was at work and on the road!

My Complaints Analyst contacted a representative of the HTB and explained Ralph's situation. The Board reviewed the matter and agreed to terminate Ralph's suspension as soon as the change could be recorded on the computerized record.

Within 48 hours of his call to our office, Ralph was at work and on the road! The thoughtful and constructive approach taken by the Highway Traffic Board illustrates the sound and compassionate decisions government agencies can and do make.

Case Summary

A Matter of Interpretation

Dawn had just obtained her Bachelor of Social Work degree and was looking forward to finding work and getting off social assistance. She applied for a number of jobs in various communities and was called for several interviews.

Dawn's problem arose when she asked the Department of Social Services for funding for gas so she could go to an interview at a centre 350 kilometres from her home. Her worker advised that funding was not available for this purpose unless Dawn could establish that there was no similar opportunity in her home community.

Dawn conceded that there were social work positions in her community but she pointed out that hers was a prime location and job postings didn't often arise. The chances of her finding a social work job in her own community were not good.

We raised the matter with an Assistant Director for the department. It was agreed that some discretion should be applied in the interpretation of the policy and allowances made for work where postings were not frequent or industries where jobs were not commonly available. Dawn's circumstances fit either of these and funding for her to attend the interview was provided. Needless to say, Dawn was very pleased.

We are hopeful that the department will extend the more practical interpretation to other social assistance recipients.

We were pleased to learn that the Assistant Director took the initiative to raise the matter with the department's head office.

We are hopeful that the department will extend the more practical interpretation to other social assistance recipients who find themselves in circumstances similar to Dawn's.

Case Summary

Sharing Responsibility

Penny received a student loan to complete a two-year program. As a single parent, Penny was eligible to have her loan forgiven under a special program to assist disadvantaged students. But Penny moved after completing her program and didn't inform Student Financial Services of her new address. As a result, she didn't receive information about the loan forgiveness program. Neither did she respond to several subsequent notices requiring her to begin repayment of her loan.

Budget

The following compares the approved budget for the Provincial Ombudsman for 2002-03 with the preceding two years:

	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03
Salaries	$1,100,000	$1,225,000	$1,208,000
Other Expenses	$377,000	$319,000	$325,000
Total	**$1,477,000**	**$1,544,000**	**$1,533,000**

Eventually, Penny's loan was turned over to a collection agent who contacted her. At this time, Penny learned about the forgiveness program and applied. However, she was found ineligible. Frustrated, Penny ignored the later calls from the collection agent and made no payment whatsoever against her loan. Finally, the matter was taken to court where a judgment was issued requiring Penny to repay the loan and accrued interest.

Some time later, Penny applied for a loan to start up a business. Realizing, finally, the impact that the outstanding debt had on her credit rating, Penny knew that she could no longer ignore the matter. She again applied for loan forgiveness and this time, the educational institution realized it had made a mistake when it considered her first application; she was eligible for forgiveness and had been throughout.

It seemed to me unfair to hold Penny entirely responsible for the school's error.

Saskatchewan Learning's Financial Assistance Branch accepted this determination and adjusted its records accordingly. However, the Branch still considered Penny responsible for interest that had accrued since she completed the program. The sum was considerable. Penny complained to my office.

Penny thought that she should not be held responsible for any of the interest that had accrued but I did not agree. Neither did I agree with the Branch that she should be responsible for all of the interest.

Instead, I thought that Penny was responsible for her failure to advise the Branch of her move and for her failure to respond to the collection agency. On the other hand, she did eventually apply and received an inaccurate rejection. Her subsequent actions were, to some degree, the consequence of that erroneous decision and so, to a greater degree, was the Branch's position. That is, barring the erroneous decision, Penny's loan would have been forgiven some years earlier and no further interest would have accrued. It seemed to me unfair to, in effect, hold Penny entirely responsible for the school's error.

I recommended that Penny remain responsible for all interest that accrued to the time that she applied for forgiveness but no interest thereafter. Both Penny and the Branch accepted this recommendation as a reasonable resolution.

All names used in case summaries included in this report are fictitious.

Case Summary

Getting What You Pay For

Jim subscribed to SaskTel's message manager service. The basic service allows storage of ten messages but Jim went for the enhanced service which allowed storage of thirty messages. For this, he paid an additional ten dollars per month.

KUDOS

We appreciate Ken Kuhling, Social Assistance Plan Supervisor, Department of Social Services, Fort Qu'Appelle who is always willing to give reasoned consideration to client complaints and offer a fair response.

Notwithstanding the enhanced service, Jim checked his messages frequently and never found more than ten. It was only after being away for a weekend that he learned that he wasn't getting the service he had paid for. He found that his phone mailbox was showing as full after storing only ten messages. He called SaskTel right away.

He had paid for service he hadn't received.

SaskTel immediately agreed that it had made a mistake and provided Jim only the basic service. It offered to provide him a credit for 12 months of enhanced service. The problem was, however, that Jim had subscribed and paid for the enhanced service for four years by the time the mistake was discovered. He had paid a total of $480 for service he hadn't received and he thought the entire amount should be refunded.

Discretion should be available for unusual cases.

My Complaints Analyst consulted with a SaskTel manager. He advised that SaskTel usually only refunds or credits customers retroactively for 12 months when errors are identified on accounts. This practice is applied to all phone utilities in Canada by the CRTC, the federal regulator of telecommunications companies.

However, this case was somewhat unusual in that Jim could not have discovered the error sooner and Jim had advised SaskTel as soon as he learned of the error. Given this and the involvement of our office, he agreed to refund Jim's costs for the whole 48 months. Needless to say, Jim was very pleased.

Clearly policies are valuable for reasonable and consistent service but discretion should be available for unusual cases. We were pleased that the SaskTel manager recognized this and are hopeful that all staff are alert to cases where the simple application of policy might not yield a fair result.

Minister's Report

Special Needs Funding
Department of Social Services

Caroline has life-long medical and intellectual challenges and has been in care for most of her life. At the time she came to us, she was residing in a group home and working at a local abilities centre.

About a decade ago, Caroline was diagnosed with Hepatitis B. Among other symptoms, she developed an itchy skin condition and has continuous open sores from scratching. Caroline received conventional treatment for this condition until 1998 when her physician agreed to let her try some herbal remedies that might be more effective. By all accounts, they were.

Caroline receives social assistance but the amount she receives is very small and intended for items of clothing, recreation and personal hygiene. The cost of the herbal remedies, in fact, exceeded her allowance. She sought funding from the Department of Social Services. Her request was denied on the basis that health-related costs are the purview of the Department of Health.

All names used in case summaries included in this report are fictitious.

Upon investigation, we confirmed that all citizens - whether social assistance recipients or not - receive health care funding via programs available from the Department of Health. While coverage is available for medications that have proven effectiveness, the value of the herbal remedies that Caroline was using was not supported by scientific evidence. Thus, coverage was not available through Department of Health programs. We were satisfied that this was reasonable.

The herbal remedies had produced a marked improvement.

However, we had anecdotal information to the effect that the remedies were effective for Caroline. Her caregivers confirmed that the herbal remedies provided more relief than the conventional, prescription remedies that Caroline had used previously. Even Caroline's doctor provided written information to the effect that the herbal remedies had produced a marked improvement and that they were proving more effective for Caroline than conventional medications had done. Indeed, the physician stated that there was no conventional medication that was effective for Caroline.

KUDOS

Kudos to Duane Ooms, Supervisor, Collections and Enforcement, Department of Finance, Regina, for acknowledging that his department may have acted precipitously and negotiating a manageable alternative resolution.

We thought that the cost of the herbal remedies should be provided by the Department of Social Services. In effect, the department is charged to assist its clients by providing funding for their basic and special needs. It seemed to us that treatment for a chronic condition might be considered a special need - if not a basic one - especially as coverage was not available through any other program. We so advised the department and recommended payment.

The Deputy Minister took the position that the department is not responsible to provide for ongoing, health-related costs. These, she said, are the responsibility of the Department of Health. I disagreed and therefore provided a formal Report and Recommendation to the Minister of Social Services.

Thus, my recommendation that the cost of the herbal remedies be provided was declined.

I advised that I was not persuaded to the Deputy Minister's view. I noted nothing in the relevant legislation and regulations to preclude special needs payment for health-related costs, as long as payment was not available elsewhere. I also noted that the cost of the herbal remedy was substantially lower than the cost of the less effective conventional remedies. It seemed to me foolish to encourage a situation whereby government would pay more via one department to obtain results less effective than would be achieved through a lower payment by another.

I think that the Department of Social Services has the authority and discretion to cover these as special needs of its clients.

The Minister of Social Services considered my report but unfortunately, did not share my view. While agreeing that the department had discretion to fund special needs, he noted that it is not possible or intended that social assistance meet all the needs of its clients. Instead, the purposes of the social assistance program are met by working collaboratively with all sectors, including other government departments. He noted that in this case, responsibility was clearly within the purview of the Department of Health. Thus, my recommendation that the cost of the herbal remedies be provided was declined.

Caroline's use of these herbal remedies may be unique but the situation in principle is not. My office, in the course of 2002, also

KUDOS

We applaud Robert Mack, Case Management Worker, Workers' Compensation Board, Regina, who showed how giving time and attention to his claimant's needs leads to better understanding for both parties and to a fair result.

considered at least two similar cases. One related to Jeff, who is an adult who has cerebral palsy. While wheelchair dependent, he is able to live independently with the occasional assistance of Home Care. Jeff arranged for an Emergency Response System; this is a pendant and special phone that allows the user to page for assistance in an emergency when unable to get to a phone. The problem was that there was an $11 per month monitoring fee. A request for funding by the department was declined as the need was considered to be health-related and therefore not within the responsibility of the Department of Social Services. While we were not successful in persuading the department to provide funding to Jeff, he was able to secure assistance through his First Nations Band. Jeff was fortunate that other resources were made available to him; others do not have such alternatives.

I am not convinced that payment would be disorderly to government administration.

I am not unsympathetic to government's desire and need to administer its many programs in a systematic and co-ordinated manner. However, I am not convinced that there is overlap between programs or responsibility in these cases. I think that the Department of Social Services has the authority and discretion to cover these as special needs of its clients and that coverage for health-related costs is not precluded unless other government programs are available. Therefore, I am not convinced that payment would be disorderly to government administration.

Case Summary

An Admirable Effort

Jeff and George both called our office after their applications for the Farm Land Property Tax Rebate Program were denied because they were submitted too late. Both had previously appealed the denials but neither was successful.

If you administer a program that has deadlines, you can be sure there will be people who will miss them. And you can be sure that some of those people will have a compelling explanation. Anticipating this, the Department of Agriculture and Food created an Independent Review Committee to consider late applications against criteria that the

Committee thought reasonable. The members of the Committee were peers of the applicants, being individuals who were also involved in farming. The Committee reviewed the circumstances alleged and denied both appeals. That's when Jeff and George came to us.

Deadlines are a necessary administrative tool.

We looked first at the criteria that the Committee has established. The criteria were circumstances that might prevent an individual from meeting the deadline such as hospitalization, death or serious illness in the family, a house fire and other catastrophic events - things that would be expected to draw your attention elsewhere. We thought that the criteria were reasonable.

Next, we looked at the applications. Jeff said that he mailed his application on time and that the Program must have failed to track it accurately. That would have been an excellent explanation and one that would call for the Program to reconsider its denial. However, the Program had accurate records, including the postmarked envelopes the applications arrived in. Jeff's was postmarked after the deadline. Thus, Jeff's application was mailed late and he offered no explanation for this. The denial was reasonable.

George, on the other hand, said that his application was late because he had suffered an injury at around the time the applications were due. While the Committee sympathized with his injury, it noted that the injury was not severe enough to preclude him from mailing his application. He was not hospitalized and hadn't sought immediate medical attention. Without too much inconvenience, he could have arranged to have the application mailed on time. Again, we thought that the denial was reasonable in the circumstances.

Deadlines are a necessary administrative tool for the effective management of programs, especially if the program is only available for a specific period of time. The department's willingness to consider exceptions is reasonable and its creation of an independent body to consider them is an admirable way of putting fairness into practice.

All names used in case summaries included in this report are fictitious.

ACR Case Summary

Learning to Live in Harmony

Frank was a long time resident of the local housing authority. He was quite active in the tenant association and was concerned about the level of involvement of the local housing authority in the association and the role of live-in caretakers. He tried to discuss these concerns with housing authority staff but felt he was not heard. He was also fearful of repercussions if he continued to complain. As a result, the environment at the residence became very strained, as was Frank's relationship with the housing authority.

The Housing Authority requested that the provincial housing division conduct an investigation into Frank's issues. Frank found the investigation process very stressful and he was even more distressed when, at the conclusion of the investigation, he was asked to move to another unit. He felt that he was the scapegoat. He called our office to complain.

We thought that our Alternative Case Resolution process might be appropriate in this case. It was likely that Frank would continue to have an on-going relationship with the housing authority and it would be best for all of the parties if that relationship was on a sound footing.

Frank was interested in meeting to discuss the investigation and its findings and to express his concerns about the process.

The local housing authority Director and the investigator from Municipal Housing Division were also willing to meet. They were interested in trying to restore harmony among the residents of the facility. Tensions were high and they did not want the situation to continue. They welcomed the opportunity to provide an explanation of their process and the recommendations arising from the investigation in a neutral forum.

My ACR staff was able to help Frank to understand what was being offered and why.

The meeting took place. The Authority staff explained the issues that led the Director to request the investigation and the investigation process. Frank expressed his concerns.

The Director also explained the measures that would be

All names used in case summaries included in this report are fictitious.

KUDOS

We recognize Ellen Berscheid, Customer Services Supervisor, SaskEnergy, Saskatoon, who looked at a complaint with fresh eyes and offered a fair resolution.

implemented. One of these was to move Frank to another unit to relieve some of the tensions among tenants. However, in recognition of the inconvenience of the move, the Authority would arrange for Frank's new suite to be painted and carpeted. In addition, they agreed to pay Frank's moving costs. My ACR staff was able to help Frank to understand what was being offered and why.

Frank did move, although reluctantly. He acknowledged, however, that as a result of the meeting, he had a better understanding of the reasons for the Authority's decisions.

Frank's case illustrates that in some cases, understanding gained through personal involvement leads to constructive results that might not be available through traditional investigation.

Case Summary

An Error Corrected

Wally was considering the purchase of a vehicle that he knew had previously been involved in an accident. He applied to SGI to find out whether the vehicle had ever been listed as a total loss as a result of an accident. SGI advised that it had not.

SGI promptly accepted responsibility for its mistake and offered a fair resolution.

Wally purchased the vehicle but did not register it for several months, as he was out of the country. Upon his return, he attempted to register the vehicle and was stunned to be informed that he could not do so until it had undergone and passed an inspection. Why? Because, SGI advised, it was a vehicle that had been written off as a total loss.

Wally felt that SGI's error had resulted in his purchasing a vehicle that he probably would not have purchased had he known it had been a total loss. At minimum, he would have paid less for it; a vehicle that has been so seriously damaged that it was written off would surely be worth less than one that had not. Not only that, but he would now have to incur the cost of the inspection and any required repairs. He thought this was unfair and complained to our office.

Our investigation confirmed that SGI made an error on the form initially issued to Wally. The form contained a box that would be

checked to indicate a total loss vehicle and staff at SGI had neglected to tick the box. SGI acknowledged its error and offered to purchase the vehicle from Wally for the same amount that he had paid. Wally agreed that this was a reasonable resolution and the matter was settled to the satisfaction of all involved.

No formal recommendation was required in this case as SGI promptly accepted responsibility for its mistake and offered a fair resolution.

Major Investigation

Locked Out: A Review of Inmate Services and Conditions of Custody in Saskatchewan Correctional Centres

The Corrections Review Report ***Locked Out*** *is available on our website at www.legweb.ca/ombudsman/ You can get a hard copy by contacting either office. See page 27.*

In the thirty years since this office opened, we have received thousands of complaints from inmates at the province's four adult correctional centres. Each of these was addressed individually and recommendations were made when warranted. However, we thought that a systemic review of services and conditions of custody in the four centres would provide a comprehensive perspective not otherwise available and that this perspective would be valuable to our office and to the Corrections Division.

Our review addresses thirteen areas of Corrections' operations.

Our review report was released in November 2002. It was simply not possible to address all of the issues that had been or might be raised. Instead, our review addresses thirteen areas of Corrections' operations that we believe have the most significant impact on inmates and the operation of custodial facilities. These are:

- Bed Space
- Living Conditions
- Property Control
- Programming Case Management
- Medical Services
- Suicide and Self-Injury
- Discipline
- Segregation
- Remand
- Aboriginal Inmates
- Staff Training
- Regina Correctional Centre

The Corrections Review Report, ***Locked Out****, is available on our website at www.legassembly.sk.ca/officers/ombud.htm. Or, you can get a hard copy by contacting either office. (See page 27)*

Overall, we concluded that in the face of increasing pressures on available bed space, out-of-date buildings and finite resources, Corrections is doing a creditable job.

But there is room for improvement, with or without additional resources. We identified areas where current practices fall short of best practice, human rights obligations and fairness generally. In regard to these, we tendered 146 recommendations. Some of the more significant of these are:

- Provide work, education and/or training opportunities for all inmates, including remanded inmates and segregated inmates;
- Provide effective programming, comparable to that available for all inmates, for inmates with mental or learning disabilities;
- Provide case management to segregated inmates, remanded inmates and those serving short sentences;
- Take steps to eliminate double-bunking and dormitories;
- Incarcerate inmates at the centre nearest their home geographic area;
- Provide detoxification programming comparable to that available in the community;
- Establish a single authority with the necessary expertise to oversee the delivery of medical services;
- Improve inmate access to mental health professionals;
- Refine policies regarding inmate property and property handling;
- Bring the living environments at all centres to equivalent standards;
- Establish independent or partially independent discipline panels;
- Afford inmates appearing before discipline and security review panels the opportunity to be represented by an agent; and
- Bring the main complex of the Regina centre up to current building standards or build a new facility.

The report was well-received and considered, I believe, balanced and thoughtful. Corrections and Public Safety has indicated that it will

KUDOS

Hooray for Trish Batten, Assistant Social Assistance Plan Supervisor, Department of Social Services, Yorkton, who has given thoughtful and compassionate consideration to many complaints and worked toward reasonable solutions for all of them.

KUDOS

Our thanks to Judith Fox, Director of Customer and Community Relations, SaskPower, Regina who is quick to recognize unfairness and equally quick to rectify it.

study the report in depth and provide a detailed response to each of the recommendations in the spring of 2003. I am hopeful that Corrections and Public Safety will conduct its review with insight and a view to excellence in its service. I am certain that if it does, inmates, staff and the larger community will all benefit.

ACR Case Summary

What's the Real Problem Here?

Our office received a number of complaints from Sandra; they were about different matters but always involved the Rentalsman's office. We suspected that problem was not just in the issues she presented to us. We thought that there was more to it.

Sandra was a landlord and often relied on the Rentalsman's office for advice and direction on how to execute measures against her tenants. She was also involved with the Rentalsman as a respondent, when her tenants complained about her. Sandra and staff at the Rentalsman's office had an on-going relationship.

Most recently, Sandra complained that Rentalsman staff had given her inaccurate advice. She said she'd been discriminated against as a landlord. There'd been numerous smaller problems. Consequently, relations between Sandra and the Rentalsman's office were strained.

Both wanted the relationship to get back on track.

Our Ombudsman Assistant (ACR) contacted both parties. They were able to identify common issues and both expressed real interested in finding a resolution. Both wanted the relationship to get back on track. A meeting was arranged.

During the meeting, it became clear that the main problem was a misunderstanding of the role of the Rentalsman and what it could do for Sandra. She was looking for advice on specific cases, while the office was providing general information. In addition to that, Sandra sometimes hadn't given complete information and so the responses she received were sometimes not helpful. Both parties were making assumptions about the other and these assumptions were generally wrong.

All names used in case summaries included in this report are fictitious.

Once the problem was identified, Sandra and the Deputy Rentalsman were able to rectify it. Sandra better understood the role of the Office of the Rentalsman and the nature of the information it provides. She understood that she needs to provide complete information in order to receive an appropriate response. The Rentalsman's office understood that it should more clearly specify to all of its clientele that it would provide only general information and never advice.

The numerous complaints were actually a symptom of a larger problem.

In this case, our office saw that the numerous complaints from Sandra were actually a symptom of a larger problem. Once the parties were able to talk with the assistance of a neutral third party, assumptions and misunderstandings were cleared up and solutions to problems were found.

It must have helped because we've received no further complaints from Sandra since the meeting.

Top Ten List

Following is a list of the ten agencies of government against whom the most complaints were lodged in 2002.

Agency	Complaints
1. Social Services	822
2. Corrections & Public Safety	645
3. Sask. Government Insurance	269
4. Justice	156
5. Workers' Compensation Board	153
6. SaskPower	115
7. SaskTel	86
8. SaskEnergy	85
9. Sask. Legal Aid Commission	45
10. Regional Health Authorities	40

KUDOS

Hats off to Sheila Vanstone, Clerk, Highway Traffic Board, Regina, who showed compassion and common sense when advised of a driver's dilemma.

All names used in case summaries included in this report are fictitious.

Case Summary

Even if You're Right, You Have to Be Fair

Dana contacted our office when the Workers' Compensation Board notified her that her benefits were being terminated retroactively. Dana had been injured in a car accident while at work and received benefits while she recuperated until she was able to return to work. Initially, she performed light duties only but was eventually able to resume her regular work.

Even so, Dana would occasionally experience pain in her neck and back. She was assessed by a team of medical personnel at the request of the Board. The team agreed with Dana's physician that a course of injections might be useful in alleviating her on-going pain. The injections worked but needed to be repeated at approximately nine month intervals. With each series of injections, Dana would be off work for about a week. She had three such treatment periods between 1998 and 2000.

After she completed the third series, the Board reviewed Dana's file and came to the conclusion that the continuing pain was not the result of the work injury. It informed her, therefore, that her benefits for wage loss and treatment would be discontinued. In fact, they were discontinued retroactive to a date preceding the first treatment. Thus, all of the wage loss benefits Dana received for the treatment periods were considered an overpayment owing to the Board.

We thought that the retroactive nature of the decision was not fair.

We reviewed the medical evidence available to the Board and concluded that the decision that Dana's on-going medical problems were not related to the work injury was reasonable. However, we thought that the retroactive nature of the decision was not fair, especially since Dana took the treatments on the recommendation of a medical assessment requested and endorsed by the Board.

The Board agreed and Dana was not held responsible for repayment of the benefits she had received. She was, of course, very relieved.

On many occasions I have discussed the need for a fair adjudication process with the Workers' Compensation Board. Dana's case is a good illustration of fairness that will hopefully be applied by Board staff in reviewing future claims.

Contact Us

To lodge a complaint, please contact us by phone, fax, letter or in person. For information about the office, to obtain copies of our publications or to request a presentation, you can also reach us by e-mail. Our addresses are as follows:

Regina Office:
#150 - 2401 Saskatchewan Drive
Regina, Saskatchewan
S4P 3V7

Phone: (306) 787-6211
Toll Free: 1-800-667-7180
Fax: (306) 787-9090
ombreg@ombudsman.sk.ca

Saskatoon Office:
315 - 25th Street East
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan
S7K 2H6

Phone: (306) 933-5500
Toll Free: 1-800-667-9787
Fax: (306) 933-8406
ombsktn@ombudsman.sk.ca

STATISTICS

Complaints RECEIVED Against Saskatchewan Departments, Boards, Commissions, Crown Corporations, and Agencies - 2002

Departments, Boards, Commissions, Crown Corporations, and Agencies	2002 Total	2001 Total
Departments		
Agriculture, Food & Rural Revitalization		
General	8	6
Lands Branch	4	5
Corrections & Public Safety		
Corrections Division		
General	12	8
Battlefords Community Correctional Centre	3	3
Community Operations Branch - Probation	19	8
Community Training Residences (CTR)	5	7
Northern Region (Besnard Lake, Buffalo Narrows, Waden Bay)	5	10
Pine Grove Correctional Centre	53	60
Prince Albert Correctional Centre	135	124
Prince Albert Healing Lodge	1	2
Regina Correctional Centre	170	180
Saskatoon Correctional Centre	241	230
Young Offenders Program Branch	1	1
Environment		
General	19	16
Licensing & Support	3	0
Executive Council		
General	2	0
Finance		
General	3	7
Public Employees' Benefits Agency	5	6
Revenue Division	3	0
Government Relations & Aboriginal Affairs		
General	2	7
Health		
General	22	27
Community Care Branch	7	5
Drug Plan & Extended Health Benefits Branch	9	15
Medical Services & Health Registration Branch	1	0
Highways & Transportation		
General	7	13
Highway Traffic Board	9	6
Industry & Resources		
General	1	1

Complaints RECEIVED Against Saskatchewan Departments, Boards, Commissions, Crown Corporations, and Agencies - 2002

Departments, Boards, Commissions, Crown Corporations, and Agencies	2002 Total	2001 Total
Departments (Cont'd)		
Justice		
General	13	9
Consumer Protection Branch	3	4
Coroner's Office Branch	2	1
Court Services Branch	12	11
Maintenance Enforcement Branch	83	71
Public Prosecutions	2	0
Public Trustee	12	18
Rentalsman/Provincial Mediation Board	26	22
Victims Services Branch	3	0
Labour		
General	1	0
Labour Standards Branch	8	12
Occupational Health & Safety Division	5	2
Learning		
General	2	6
Career & Employment Services Unit	1	1
Post-Secondary Education & Skills Training	2	8
Student Financial Assistance Branch	19	25
Training & Development Programs Unit	1	1
Social Services		
General	9	4
Adoption Branch	1	0
Building Independence Program	12	14
Child Day Care Division	4	2
Community Living Division	2	2
Family & Youth Services Division	37	32
Housing Division		
General	5	5
Beauval Housing Authority	1	1
Buffalo Narrows Housing Authority	4	0
Humboldt Housing Authority	1	1
La Loche Housing Authority	2	14
Melfort Housing Authority	1	0
Moose Jaw Housing Authority	3	1
Prince Albert Housing Authority	1	3
Radville Housing Authority	1	0
Raymore Housing Authority	1	0
Saskatoon Housing Authority	3	5
Sedley Housing Authority	1	0
Income Security Division	733	584

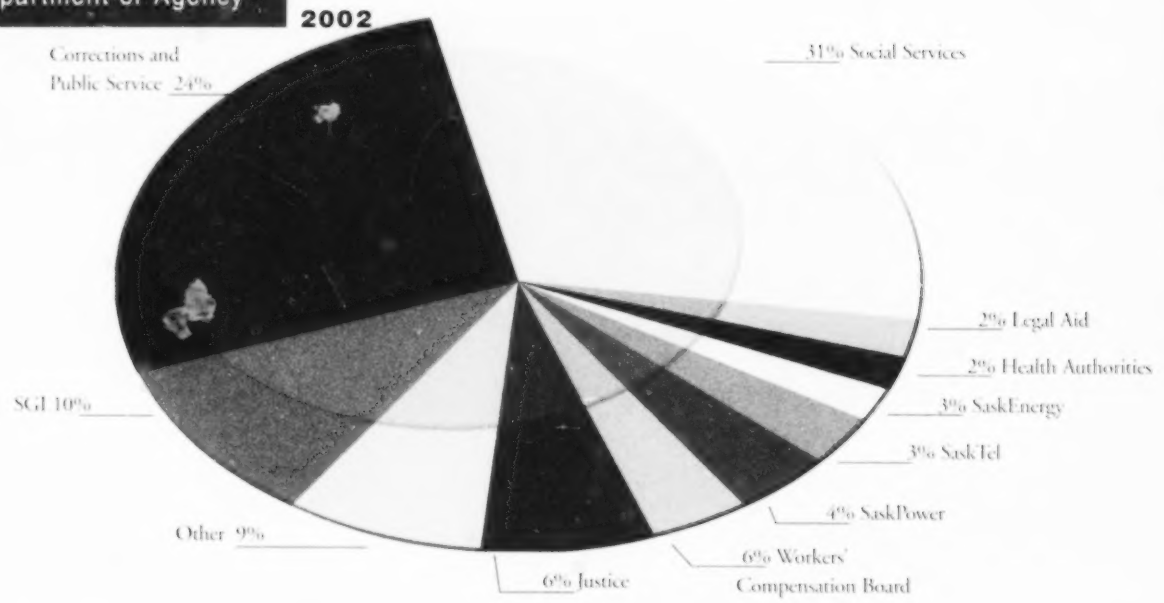
Complaints RECEIVED Against Saskatchewan Departments, Boards, Commissions, Crown Corporations, and Agencies - 2002

Departments, Boards, Commissions, Crown Corporations, and Agencies	2002 Total	2001 Total
Boards		
Agricultural Implements Board	2	0
Labour Relations Board	1	1
Lands Appeal Board	2	1
Rates Appeal Board	2	0
Regional Health Authorities		
Cypress Regional Health Authority	1	2
Five Hills Regional Health Authority	1	1
Heartland Regional Health Authority	1	0
Kelsey Trail Regional Health Authority	1	4
Mamawetan Churchill River Regional Health Authority	1	1
Prairie North Regional Health Authority	6	7
Prince Albert Parkland Regional Health Authority	5	9
Regina Qu'Appelle Regional Health Authority	13	2
Saskatoon Regional Health Authority	9	14
Sun Country Regional Health Authority	1	1
Sunrise Regional Health Authority	1	3
Saskatchewan Human Rights Tribunal	1	0
Saskatchewan Municipal Board		
General	1	0
Assessment Appeals Committee	3	0
Social Services Appeal Board	12	12
Surface Rights Arbitration Board	2	0
Water Appeal Board	1	1
Workers' Compensation Board	153	159
Commissions		
Public Service Commission	6	3
Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission	6	7
Saskatchewan Legal Aid Commission	45	49
Saskatchewan Securities Commission	1	0

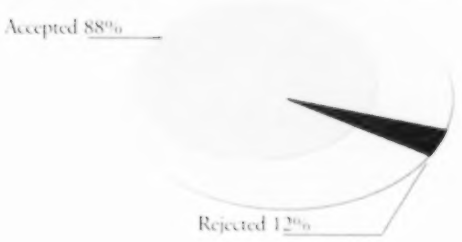
Complaints RECEIVED Against Saskatchewan Departments, Boards, Commissions, Crown Corporations, and Agencies - 2002

Departments, Boards, Commissions, Crown Corporations, and Agencies	2002 Total	2001 Total
Crown Corporations		
Agricultural Credit Corporation of Saskatchewan	1	1
Crown Investment Corporation	1	1
Information Services Corporation of Saskatchewan	16	3
Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Corporation	5	5
Saskatchewan Gaming Corporation	2	0
Saskatchewan Government Insurance		
General	15	21
Auto Fund	48	32
Claims Division		
Auto Claim	82	110
Other Claims	40	30
Personal Injury Protection Plan	84	24
Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science & Technology (SIAST)	9	2
Saskatchewan Transportation Company	1	2
Saskatchewan Water Corporation	3	6
SaskEnergy	85	65
SaskPower	115	143
SaskTel	86	79
Agencies		
Saskatchewan Cancer Agency	1	0
Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming Authority		
General	5	1
Liquor & Gaming Licensing Commission	3	0
Totals	**2,647**	**2,435**

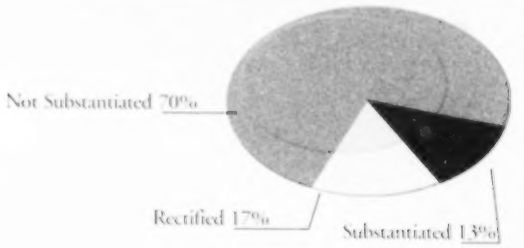
Complaints Received by Department or Agency



Recommendations to Government



Results of Complaints



2002
Complaints Other Than Against Saskatchewan Departments, Boards, Commissions, Crown Corporations, and Agencies

Category	Regina	Saskatoon	Total	%
Children's Advocate Referrals	22	37	59	3
Consumer	152	266	418	22
Courts/Legal	56	103	159	8
Family	0	5	5	.4
Federal	135	233	368	19
First Nations	0	7	7	.5
Local Government	39	82	121	6
Medical	1	22	42	.1
Metis	9	0	1	2
Other	408	255	663	34
Private	52	19	71	4
Professional	7	18	25	1
Totals	**881**	**1,047**	**1,928**	**100**

Complaints CLOSED Against Saskatchewan Departments, Boards, Commissions, Crown Corporations, and Agencies - 2002

Departments, Boards, Commissions, Crown Corporations, and Agencies	Not Substantiated	Resolved	Assistance Rendered	Alternative Case Resolution	Other	2002 Total	2001 Total
Departments							
Agriculture, Food & Rural Revitalization							
General	2	0	2	2	1	7	4
Lands Appeal Board	1	0	0	0	0	1	0
Lands Branch	3	0	2	1	1	7	1
Livestock Branch	1	0	0	0	0	1	0
Corrections & Public Safety	0	0	1	0	0	1	0
Corrections Division							
General	1	3	4	0	3	11	6
Battlefords Community Correctional Centre	1	0	2	0	0	3	3
Community Operations Branch - Probation	0	1	14	1	2	18	7
Community Training Residences (CTR)	4	0	3	0	1	8	5
Northern Region (Besnard Lake, Buffalo Narrows, Waden Bay)	1	0	2	0	2	5	11
Pine Grove Correctional Centre	1	3	42	0	8	54	58
Prince Albert Correctional Centre	20	13	86	0	16	135	118
Prince Albert Healing Lodge	0	1	0	0	0	1	2
Regina Correctional Centre	28	33	70	6	49	186	152
Saskatoon Correctional Centre	30	30	167	1	20	248	218
Young Offenders Program	0	0	1	0	0	1	1
Environment							
General	5	1	4	5	4	19	13
Fish & Wildlife Branch	0	1	0	0	0	1	0
Licensing & Support	0	0	1	1	0	2	0
Executive Council	0	0	1	0	1	2	0
Finance							
General	0	0	3	0	0	3	7
Public Employees' Benefits Agency	0	0	2	0	1	3	8
Revenue Division	1	0	1	1	0	3	0
Government Relations & Aboriginal Affairs	0	0	2	0	0	2	4
Health							
General	2	3	10	1	3	19	32
Community Care Branch	1	0	3	1	2	7	4
Drug Plan & Extended Health Benefits Branch	2	2	2	2	2	10	12
Medical Services & Health Registration Branch	0	0	1	0	0	1	0
Highways & Transportation							
General	4	0	0	3	2	9	10
Highway Traffic Board	5	2	0	0	1	8	7
Industry & Resources	0	0	1	0	1	2	1

Complaints CLOSED Against Saskatchewan Departments, Boards, Commissions, Crown Corporations, and Agencies - 2002

Departments, Boards, Commissions, Crown Corporations, and Agencies	Not Substantiated	Resolved	Assistance Rendered	Alternative Case Resolution	Other	2002 Total	2001 Total
Departments (Cont'd)							
Justice							
General	1	1	6	0	5	13	9
Consumer Protection Branch	0	0	0	1	1	2	4
Coroner's Office Branch	0	0	2	0	0	2	2
Court Services Branch	0	2	7	0	1	10	11
Maintenance Enforcement Office	1	5	59	6	8	79	72
Public Prosecutions	0	0	0	0	2	2	1
Public Trustee	0	1	9	1	1	12	21
Rentalsman/Provincial Mediation Board	1	0	15	5	7	28	21
Victims Services Branch	0	0	2	0	1	3	0
Labour							
Labour Standards Branch	2	0	4	0	2	8	12
Occupational Health & Safety Division	0	1	2	0	2	5	2
Office of the Workers' Advocate	0	0	0	1	0	1	1
Learning							
General	0	0	0	1	0	1	6
Career & Employment Services Unit	0	0	0	0	1	1	1
Post-Secondary Education & Skills Training	0	1	1	0	1	3	7
Student Financial Assistance Unit	0	2	16	0	1	19	27
Training & Development Programs Unit	0	0	0	0	1	1	1
Social Services							
General	0	0	6	0	3	9	4
Adoption Branch	0	0	0	1	0	1	0
Building Independence Program	0	3	7	1	0	11	12
Child Day Care Division	0	0	1	1	2	4	2
Community Living Division	0	1	1	0	1	3	1
Family & Youth Services Division	2	0	22	4	4	32	32
Housing Division							
General	2	1	2	2	1	8	18
Battlefords Housing Authority	0	0	1	0	0	1	0
Buffalo Narrows Regional Housing Authority	0	1	3	0	0	4	2
Estevan Housing Authority	0	1	0	0	0	1	0
Humboldt Housing Authority	0	0	0	0	1	1	0
La Loche Housing Authority	0	0	1	0	0	1	12
Melfort Housing Authority	0	0	0	1	0	1	0
Moose Jaw Housing Authority	0	0	1	2	0	3	1
Prince Albert Housing Authority	0	0	1	0	0	1	1
Radville Housing Authority	0	0	0	0	1	1	0
Raymore Housing Authority	0	1	0	0	0	1	1
Saskatoon Housing Authority	0	1	1	1	0	3	5
Income Security Program	14	38	609	30	34	725	579

Complaints CLOSED Against Saskatchewan Departments, Boards, Commissions, Crown Corporations, and Agencies - 2002

Departments, Boards, Commissions, Crown Corporations, and Agencies	Not Substantiated	Resolved	Assistance Rendered	Alternative Case Resolution	Other	2002 Total	2001 Total
Boards							
Agricultural Implements Board	0	0	0	0	1	1	0
Labour Relations Board	0	0	1	0	0	1	1
Lands Appeal Board	1	0	0	0	0	1	0
Rates Appeal Board	1	0	0	0	0	1	0
Regional Health Authorities							
Cypress Regional Health Authority	0	0	1	0	0	1	2
Five Hills Regional Health Authority	0	0	1	1	0	2	1
Heartland Regional HealthAuthority	0	0	0	0	1	1	0
Kelsey Trail Regional Health Authority	0	0	1	0	0	1	2
Mamawetan Churchhill River Regional Health Authority	0	0	1	0	0	1	1
Prairie North Regional Health Authority	0	1	3	1	1	6	7
Prince Albert Parkland Regional Health Authority	0	1	2	2	0	5	2
Regina Qu'Appelle Regional Health Authority	1	0	4	2	6	13	9
Saskatoon Regional Health Authority	2	0	5	1	2	10	11
Sunrise Regional Health Authority	0	0	1	0	0	1	3
Saskatchewan Human Rights Tribunal	0	0	1	0	0	1	0
Saskatchewan Municipal Board Assessment Appeals Committee	1	0	1	0	1	3	2
Social Services Appeal Board	10	1	0	0	3	14	12
Surface Rights Arbitration Board	0	0	1	0	1	2	0
Water Appeal Board	1	0	0	0	1	2	1
Workers' Compensation Board	11	4	127	1	12	155	147
Commissions							
Public Service Commission	0	2	3	1	0	6	2
Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission	0	0	5	0	0	5	6
Saskatchewan Legal Aid Commission	6	1	29	1	14	51	43
Saskatchewan Securities Commission	0	0	1	0	0	1	1

Complaints CLOSED Against Saskatchewan Departments, Boards, Commissions, Crown Corporations, and Agencies - 2002

Departments, Boards, Commissions, Crown Corporations, and Agencies	Not Substantiated	Resolved	Assistance Rendered	Alternative Case Resolution	Other	2002 Total	2001 Total
Crown Corporations							
Agricultural Credit Corporation of Saskatchewan	0	0	1	0	0	1	1
Crown Investments Corporation of Saskatchewan	0	0	0	0	1	1	1
Information Services Corporation	0	2	9	1	4	16	3
Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Corporation	2	0	2	0	1	5	6
Saskatchewan Gaming Corporation	0	0	0	0	1	1	0
Saskatchewan Government Insurance							
General	2	2	9	0	2	15	22
Auto Fund	1	5	31	2	6	45	33
Claims Division							
Auto Claim	3	7	51	7	14	82	124
Other Claims	2	4	21	2	7	36	26
Personal Injury Protection Plan	0	1	53	8	13	75	26
Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science & Technology (SIAST)	2	0	3	0	4	9	3
Saskatchewan Transportation Company	0	0	1	0	0	1	2
Saskatchewan Water Corporation	1	0	1	0	1	3	9
SaskEnergy	1	13	64	0	6	84	62
SaskPower	6	16	77	2	12	113	140
SaskTel	4	13	48	11	13	89	79
Agencies							
Saskatchewan Assessment Management Agency	1	0	0	0	0	1	2
Saskatchewan Liquor & Gaming Authority							
General	0	1	2	0	1	4	1
Liquor, Gaming & Licensing Commission	0	0	1	0	2	3	0
Saskatchewan Police Complaints Investigator	1	0	0	0	0	1	3
Wascana Rehabilitation Centre	1	0	0	0	0	1	1
Totals	197	227	1,768	126	332	2,650	2,349